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sive; once admit his principle (a principle clearly his own, not that of his opponents), that the church is bound to acquiesce in the judgment of the Pope, and the conclusion which Milner thinks it better to deny than to defend, follows at once.

But Milner replies, Bellarmine is here speaking *hypothetically*. To be sure he is speaking hypothetically, and we cited him as speaking hypothetically. We fancy Milner wished his readers to suppose that "speaking hypothetically" means saying something that one does not believe, or is not sure of, and does not wish to "teach positively." For the benefit, then, of our unlearned readers, we beg to explain that a hypothetical proposition means nothing more than a sentence with an *if* in it; and that one may be as sure of a hypothetical proposition, and teach it as positively as any other. We may be quite sure that, "if there is no rain we shall have a bad harvest," even though we are not at all sure whether it will rain or not, or whether the harvest will be good or not. Now, whatever virtues there may be in the cardinal's "*if*" we have faithfully preserved.\* We do not accuse him of saying that Popes are in the habit of commanding vices, and forbidding virtues: neither do we charge him with maintaining that the church is bound to believe virtues to be good, or vices evil; it is quite beside the question to discuss what his opinion may be on either of these points; but we re-assert, advisedly, that Bellarmine maintains—what we admit to be, in logical language, a "hypothetical proposition," but still a very monstrous one, and worthy of as many notes of exclamation as we may choose to affix to it—viz., that "IF the Pope should so far err as to command vice, and to prohibit virtues, then the church would be bound to believe that vices are good, and virtues evil!!!"

We now call on "Investigator" to refer to Bellarmine himself, and to try whether he can find any trace of the words which Milner has interpolated. We look with some curiosity to see whether he will make us the "*amende honorable*" for the unfounded charge he has brought against us, or whether he will "seek to evade the difficulty in which he has placed"—himself.

#### ON INFALLIBILITY.

[In our March number, we inserted a letter from Mr. Rourke, so extremely long, that we were obliged to omit several valuable communications from other respected correspondents. As he has now sent us another letter, of almost equal length, we trust he will not be offended, if we break it up into paragraphs, and make a few brief remarks on each, as we go on. Our printer has directions to insert as much of the letter as he can find room for.—ED.]

#### TO THE EDITOR OF THE CATHOLIC LAYMAN.

"SIR—I again beg to tender you my meed of thanks for your kindness in giving my last letter a place in your periodical. I read with sorrow and not with anger, your observations on that letter, which clearly showed that you had lost equanimity in replying to it. Now, I would say, let us argue dispassionately, in a Christian spirit, and with that charity which 'is not easily provoked.' Let us 'be kindly affectioned one to another with brotherly love.'"

[We should be sorry if any of our readers had good reason to suppose that the tone of our comments on Mr. Rourke's former letter exhibited a want of proper equanimity. All we said was—that Mr. Rourke's second letter was very long, and declamatory, and dictatorial, rather than argumentative. We think so still; and hope it was no breach of Christian charity to say so, especially when we, in the same paragraph, praised the ability and clearness of his previous letter. We can hardly regret having said so much, since Mr. Rourke's present letter is considerably more to the purpose.]

"When I entered the field of controversy with you, Mr. Editor, I did so as a simple, unlearned member of the Catholic Church, and not as a logician or a theologian; so if my style of writing be quaint, and my language destitute of rhetorical and argumentative flourishes, your readers, I hope, will not be surprised, nor yourself disappointed."

[To this we have only to say, that we beg, in future, Mr. Rourke will favour us with as many arguments as he pleases, and as little as possible of the "rhetorical flourishes."]

"Having said so much by way of preface, I will, with your permission, resume my subject, by giving, first, a quotation from the Holy Book, which irrefragably proves the infallibility of the Church of Christ. The apostle of nations, in writing to the Ephesians, says 'that God has not only placed in his church, apostles, prophets, and evangelists, but also pastors and teachers'—Eph. iv. 2. For what end? 'For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the minis-

try, for the edifying of the body of Christ."—Eph. v. 12. How long? 'Till we all come to the unity of faith.'—Eph. v. 13. For what end? 'That henceforth we be no more like children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive.'—Eph. v. 14. This is evidently spoken in reference to the people who are here taught—first, that the pastors of the church are appointed by God himself to be their guides in faith; secondly, that these guides shall continue in the Church of Christ without ceasing to the end of the world—'till we all come to the unity of faith'; thirdly, that, in all controversies of religion, it belongs to these guides to fix the wavering judgment of the people, against all the wicked arts of impostors and seducers, and that, by consequence, the faithful ought to rely on their directions with an entire confidence. For the apostle says—'We are of God: he that knoweth God heareth us; he that is not of God, heareth us not. By this we know the spirit of truth, and the spirit of error.'—1 John iv. 6. For unless they may be safely depended on, they would not fully answer the end of their institution; the people, especially the ignorant, upon every new and difficult debate, would be left in uncertainty, and might even suspect their guides to be their seducers."

[We have now, again, to complain that Mr. Rourke mixes up very plain texts of Scripture with very doubtful comments of his own. Every member of the Church of England readily assents to the statement of the apostle, that God has appointed pastors and teachers in his church, and that the office of such teachers is to instruct and edify the people, who are the body of Christ. But what the apostle does not assert is, that such pastors and teachers cannot possibly fall into error, and that in every difficult debate the people may always absolutely depend on them without any uncertainty, or any necessity of inquiring for themselves. Now, a divine of the Church of Rome cannot consistently adopt Mr. Rourke's interpretation of this passage; for the Church of Rome acknowledges the orders of the Greek Church. There are about fifty millions of Christians whose pastors (according to the Romish theory) teach fatal error; whose "guides are their seducers," and on whose directions the "people cannot rely with an entire confidence." It is plain, therefore, that any texts which merely assert that God has appointed an order of clergy for the teaching of the people, cannot be interpreted to mean, that the directions of such clergy can be followed implicitly without risk of error.

It is scarcely necessary to say, how irrelevant is the text cited from St. John's epistle, from which Mr. Rourke seems to infer that every clergyman of the present day is as divinely inspired as were St. John and his brother apostles.]

"But blessed for ever be the mercy of God who has settled upon earth a visible church, which is the pillar and ground of truth, against which the gates of hell shall never prevail; and to which he has promised the Spirit of Truth for ever. So that I leave any one to judge whether they who refuse to submit their private reason to the authority of this Church, be not in danger of being self-convicted at the great tribunal of God; and I leave it to him to consider whether any man can hope to attain salvation who lives wilfully out of the communion of that church which Christ came to establish for the salvation of mankind, and of which it is said—'The Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved.'—Acts ii. 47. If all men had but faith enough to believe the church established by Christ himself, to be our guide, and humility enough to submit their judgment to her's, there had never been any heresy in the Christian world. Which, as it shows, on the one hand, the excellency of Christ's institution, so, on the other, it is a dreadful instance of the pride and misery of mankind, who had rather lose heaven by presumption, than gain it by following better lights than their own."

[This paragraph is pervaded by Mr. Rourke's old fallacy, that what is said in Scripture of the church must necessarily be understood of the Church of Rome—a church which actually *did not exist* at the time to which the passage in Acts ii. refers! We are as certain as Mr. Rourke is, that no man can rationally hope to attain salvation who lives wilfully out of the communion of the true Church of Christ—of which, it is said in that chapter—"The Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved."]

"Well, I have given you nearly twenty passages from the Divine Book which clearly, ay, irrefutably prove the infallibility of the Church of Christ. But you cannot see infallibility in those passages. I will tell you why you cannot see it. Because (I do not mean the slightest offence), you are walking in 'the valley of the shadow of death,' and because you are 'blind without sleep.'"

[This passage contains only "rhetorical and argumentative flourishes;" we do not think it necessary to give any reply to it, beyond assuring Mr. R. that it does not disturb our "equanimity" in the least. Whether it be consistent with Christian charity to charge one's opponent with wilful blindness to what is irrefutably proved by the Holy Scriptures, we leave to the judgment of our dispassionate readers.]

"Pardon this digression. To continue, we believe that in the Gospel is recorded a part, and, indeed, a very small part, of what Christ did and preached during his visible existence on earth.—See John xxi. 25.

"We believe the authors of those Gospels to have been inspired by the Holy Ghost, and, therefore, we believe every

word contained in them, as proceeding from the fountain of truth. As we believe the Gospel of Christ to be a divine book, so we believe that none but a divine authority can expound the same. We shudder at the idea of bringing that divine book before the tribunal of limited or corrupted reason, and we candidly confess that, although we were provided with a greater share of wisdom and knowledge than Solomon possessed, we should still be unequal of ourselves, to the task of understanding and explaining the Gospel, or other parts of Holy Writ. In this we are confirmed by St. Peter, who says that 'no prophecy of the Scripture is made by private interpretation.'—2 Peter i. 20. As we believe that Holy Scripture is the Word of God, as we believe that Holy Scripture, misrepresented, is not the Word of God, but the word of corrupted man; and that Scripture is often misrepresented, we are obliged to believe, from the assertion of St. Peter, who tells us that the unlearned and unstable wrest the Scriptures to their own destruction.—See 2 Peter iii. 16. And likewise from our own observations. For, as "common sense" tells us, that the Holy Ghost cannot be the author of contradictory doctrines, so it tells us that numbers of doctrines, preached pretensively from Scripture, must be false, as they stand in contradiction to other doctrines drawn from the same Scripture."

[Mr. Rourke here draws very strange conclusions from the principles which we hold in common with him. We all agree, that the Scriptures were given by the inspiration of God, for the instruction of his people; He knew the extent of man's ability, and He surely had power to express those doctrines which He deemed it needful for man to know, in such language that a man of humble and teachable mind could understand them. But, Mr. Rourke seems to proceed upon the principle that the greater the wisdom of him who speaks, the greater the difficulty of understanding the meaning of what he says; so that while any peasant can understand what a priest speaks or writes, not even "the wisdom of Solomon can understand or explain" what is written by the inspiration of God himself.

Mr. Rourke quotes two passages from the second Epistle of St. Peter, in support of his views. The first of these is plainly irrelevant. According to Mr. Rourke's own translation, the passage states, how prophecy is "made," not how it is to be explained; which meaning appears, to be confirmed by the concluding words of the verse, which Mr. Rourke has omitted to cite—"for holy men of old spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost." The second passage is a very favourite one with Roman Catholic controversial writers; but familiar as we are with Mr. Rourke's interpretations of Scripture, we needed no formal proof that it is very possible to wrest texts of the Bible to a sense very different from what the writers intended. But, notwithstanding this, a moment's examination of the text, from 2 Pet. iii. 16, proves two points—one, that in St. Peter's time, the "unlearned and unstable" had the Scriptures in their hands, contrary to the modern practice of the Church of Rome; the other, that the remedy given by St. Peter for such risk of misinterpretation was not to close up the volume of Scripture altogether, and trust to the interpretation of the church, which is the plan Mr. Rourke would suggest, but (see the following verse) "to grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ"—a knowledge which can only be acquired by the constant study of those very Scriptures which are able to make us wise unto salvation.

We quite agree with Mr. Rourke in the concluding assertion of the paragraph, that "the Holy Ghost cannot be the author of contradictory doctrines;" and this is one of our reasons for believing that either the ancient or modern Church of Rome must have erred grievously from the true faith. If Mr. Rourke will refer to an article in our present number on this subject, he will find it proved, beyond the possibility of contradiction, that, upon several most important points, the ancient and modern Church of Rome do put forward contradictory doctrines. If the ancient Church was right, then the modern Church of Rome is in great error. If, on the other hand, the modern doctrines be true, then the Church of Rome could not always have been infallible. Mr. Rourke is at liberty to select whichever horn of the dilemma he pleases.]

(To be continued in our next).

#### ON PRAYERS FOR THE DEAD AND THE BURIAL SERVICE.

WE received some time ago a letter from Mr. E. Power, for which we were unable to make room in our last two numbers. Finding that its unmanageable length rendered it uncertain whether it could be inserted in the present number, we have been unwilling to postpone it any longer, and have, therefore, had recourse to the same expedient, as in the case of Mr. Rourke; printing half of it now, and leaving the other half for next month.

#### TO THE EDITOR OF THE CATHOLIC LAYMAN.

SIR—That Mr. Thorndike did not hold the belief of the Church of England on the subject of prayers for the dead, is notorious from the passage which I cited from his writings; and hence the purpose for which I cited that passage (though you could not conceive it), and to which I have so palpably and exclusively applied it, must be self-evident—namely, to show how oddly the doctrine laid down therein contrasts with that of the burial office; for if the doctrine advocated by this learned Protestant be orthodox,

\* A curious instance of the reckless manner in which Roman Catholic divines have come to the defence of Bellarmine, is afforded by Dr. Wiseman, or some other writer in the "Dublin Review," edited by him. Dr. Wordsworth having cited this same passage from Bellarmine, the reviewer writes—"What would Dr. Wordsworth say of us if we were to charge him with the following opinion, which we give in his own words—'The infidel might justly assert that all our religion is a bare groundless faith.' We have done with his book only what he has done with that of Bellarmine, suppressed the hypothetical clause." It is quite true that the process by which the reviewer got this doctrine out of Dr. Wordsworth's book was by mutilating a sentence, and leaving out the hypothetical clause; but Dr. Wordsworth does not treat the cardinal in like manner, but copies his *as faithfully* as we did ourselves.